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ABSTRACT

This bibliography is meant to reflect the growing diversity and complexity of the theory and social thought that contribute to contemporary planning. The purpose of this bibliography is to explore this diversity as it pertains to the various biases in planning as a social process. The organization of the document reflects the various levels--individual, organizational, social, and urban--at which social theory has been formulated with pertinence to planning. (Author/MLF)

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PLANNING AND SOCIAL THEORY: A Selected Bibliography

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PLANNING AND SOCIAL THEORY: A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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INTRODUCTION

The following bibliography is meant to reflect the growing diversity and complexity of theory and social thought which contributes to contemporary planning as a professional discipline. The purpose of this bibliography is to explore this diversity, especially, however, as it pertains to the various biases on planning as a social process which these perspectives engender. The emphasis is not upon method and detail but rather upon classification and understanding.

Particular emphasis is given to the contrast in social science philosophy between the more traditional positivistic theories used by planning on the one side, and the growing body of humanistically oriented theory characterized by phenomenology and ethnomethodology, symbolic interactionism, and the Frankfurt School's neo-Marxism on the other. The interest in advocacy planning, in particular, would seem to call for more concern with what Trent Shroyer calls the hermeneutic (interpretive) sciences. The Frankfurt School goes beyond this, of course, to call for a critical science, or one based upon a society of self-reflective individuals not unlike that described as "post-industrial". Of all professionals, planners would seem most to require the educational basis for self reflection, given the importance of their instrumental activities in maintaining the various symbolic systems in which they participate. Most statements on planning theory ignore these contrasting views of social science, assuming rather a positivistic orientation, with the result that planners have been generally

ill-equipped to reflect upon their activites. Thus, city planners have been particularly vulnerable to criticism from the New Left, as the David Gurin paper illustrates so well. The advocacy planning response to this criticism has not been especially well served by theory, although Lisa Peattie has contributed important insights in this respect.

The organization of the bibliography is meant to reflect the various levels - individual, organizational, social and urban - at which social theory has been formulated with pertinence to planning, though naturally there are extensions from one level to others. For example, strategic social level planning derives from decision and game theory, urban level theory from organization theory, etc. Not every issue nor important contribution is included at each level, either; in fact, the most difficult task is deciding where to cut off each section. In that sense no bibliography is final, and this one is no exception.

Because of its size the bibliography has been used in the classroom under an arrangement where each student reads and duplicates notes on an average of one reading per section. With some reservations pertaining to the range of quality in notes this system has worked fairly well over the past several years at Washington University.

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